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in their cause and his defence of their management, nor in any way be scandalized if these stores employ hired servants at fixed wages, when the servants work for reasonable hours at reasonable pay. Where is the harm? unless we are to become irreconcilables and take a line from Milton, with due adaptation, for our maxim :

“Better to reign and starve than serve in plenty.”

CHARLES S. DEVAS.

MODERN CIVILIZATION IN SOME OF ITS ECONOMIC ASPECTS. By W. Cunningham, D.D., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. London: Methuen, 1896.

This is one of Messrs. Methuen's series of small volumes on “Social questions of to-day,” and aims at being an “elementary treatise on political economy . . . useful to those who are making a beginning in the consideration of modern social problems . . . intended for ordinary readers.”

Now precisely in this aim and this intention is the weak point of the book, which, like all else that Dr. Cunningham writes, contains much that is very valuable and suggestive, but for the trained student not for beginners. Clear definitions, easily-grasped classifications, and consistency at least in appearance, are the requisites for beginners; and these are not the characteristics of this volume. In particular, no raw student, or still less any general reader, could reconcile the seeming Malthusianism, individualism, and cultus of competition in some parts of the book with the ethical point of view and realistic regard for facts in other parts. For example, Dr. Cunningham says in one place: “Monopoly is comparatively rare now . . . competition has forced its way into every department . . . in all departments of life and all along the line the triumph of individualism in industry and commerce has been complete” (p. 165 *seq.*). But in another place he says: “Each of the great railways of the country is a giant monopoly. . . . There is a tendency at the present day for monopoly to arise as the very result of competition, and for giant enterprises to absorb the business that was done by small competitors” (pp. 206-7). Again he says: “The economic man, who out of mere self-interest exerts himself to do his best, is unconsciously . . . promoting the material well-being of society” (p. 179). But, besides having instantly to soften his text in a note, he soon quits this conventional fiction, and both says and shows that “there are many methods of com-

petition, which, though they may be for the immediate gain of certain traders, are yet injurious to the public" (p. 186). Finally, to complete my fault-finding, instead of starting with realities and making the family the economic unit, Dr. Cunningham writes in places as though each of us entered this world *enfant trouvé* and left it *célibataire*. The individual is taken as the starting-point, and then his supposed action is "modified" by a number of influences, the family among them. The reader is therefore shunted on the wrong track of a mistaken method, and, unlike the author, may never get off it.

But for advanced students, as I have said, there is much valuable and suggestive matter in this book, notably on monopolies (§ 25), on cost of production (§ 26), on unproductive consumption (§ 62), and on rent (§ 65). The chapter on the intervention of the state is well worth study, and has the good epigram, that we cannot make men moral by Act of Parliament, but can make them decent. Above all, in a society where the rule for riches seems to be irresponsibility tempered by confiscation, Dr. Cunningham is to be congratulated on boldly affirming the ancient Christian principles of the responsibility of ownership, the brotherhood of all races, the duty and dignity of labor (§§ 78, 79). I do not feel quite sure whether his distinction of Christian sentiment and Christian principle is the same as that of the counsels and the commandments of Catholic theology; for the terminology of the Church of England is obscure; but St. Thomas Aquinas himself would have put hand and seal to the following passages: "Christian principle recognizes no absolute ownership . . . insists that the rich man is merely a steward . . . condemns private attacks on property . . . denies any justice in the demand of the poor that they should share with the rich, but . . . insists on the duties which the rich owe to God and to man in the administration of their wealth . . . gives no countenance to the narrow patriotism which seeks to oppress other races and to grasp at every opportunity of self-aggrandizement . . . condemns not only the waste of things by extravagance, but the waste of time in idleness. From the pagan point of view work is an evil to be avoided . . . the ideal of life is leisure for enjoyment. The Christian, on the contrary, regards the work he has to do as the centre of his whole life."

CHARLES S. DEVAS.